



Washington State Auditor's Office

Government that works for citizens

Accountability Audit Report **Senate**

For the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

Published July 28, 2016

Report No. 1017186





Washington State Auditor's Office

July 28, 2016

Hunter Goodman, Secretary of the Senate
Washington State Senate
Olympia, Washington

Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The State Auditor's Office takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for Senate operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

The attached comprises our report on the Senate's compliance and safeguarding of public resources. Our independent audit report describes the overall results and conclusions for areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and we value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

TROY KELLEY
STATE AUDITOR
OLYMPIA, WA

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AUDIT SUMMARY

Results in brief

In the areas we audited, Senate operations complied with applicable requirements and provided adequate safeguarding of public resources. The Senate also complied with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures in the areas we examined.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Senate from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

Our audit involved performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Senate's uses of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity or area. Instead, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. The following areas were examined during this audit period:

- Travel reimbursements
- Payroll
- Cash receipting

RELATED REPORTS

Financial

We perform an annual audit of the statewide basic financial statements, as required by state law (RCW 43.09.310). Our opinion on these financial statements is included in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) prepared by and available from the Office of Financial Management.

The CAFR reflects the financial activities of all funds, organizations, institutions, agencies, departments and offices that are part of the state's reporting entity. That report is issued by the Office of Financial Management in December of each year and can be found at www.ofm.wa.gov.

A summary of the audit for the period ending June 30, 2015, can be found at: <http://www.sao.wa.gov/resources/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx>

Federal programs

In accordance with the Single Audit Act, we annually audit major federal programs administered by the state of Washington. Rather than perform a single audit of each agency, we audit the state as a whole. The results of that audit are published in a report issued by the Office of Financial Management in March of each year.

Performance audits

Initiative 900, approved by voters in 2005, gives the State Auditor's Office the authority to conduct independent performance audits of state and local government entities. Performance audits may include objective analysis on ways to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs and identify best practices.

We issued the separate Safe Data Disposal –Protecting Confidential Information performance audit report, which is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SENATE

The Washington State Senate makes up half of the bicameral body of the Washington State Legislature. The Senate has 49 members that represent their respective districts. Senators are elected to serve four-year terms. The Senate's primary functions are to represent and provide leadership for the people of the state of Washington, to enact laws and oversee their administration, and to provide for the public well-being while protecting and maintaining the rights of the individual.

The Senate has 215 permanent employees and hires approximately 111 additional temporary employees as well as 47 interns during the last session. For the year under audit, the Senate had an annual budget of approximately \$24 million.

Contact information related to this report	
Address:	Senate Legislative Building 416 Sid Snyder Avenue S.W. P.O. Box 40482 Olympia, WA 98504-0482
Contact:	Staff Coordinator: Marnie Hamlin, Senate Human Resources and Accounting Office
Telephone:	(360) 786-7598
Website:	www.leg.wa.gov/Senate

Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Senate at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the state's Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the citizens of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with our audit clients and citizens to achieve our vision of government that works for citizens, by helping governments work better, cost less, deliver higher value, and earn greater public trust.

In fulfilling our mission to hold state and local governments accountable for the use of public resources, we also hold ourselves accountable by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency and developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an elected agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits and investigations. Our audits are designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state, and local laws.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with state, federal and local laws on the part of all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits of state agencies and local governments as well as [fraud](#), state [whistleblower](#) and [citizen hotline](#) investigations.

The results of our work are widely distributed through a variety of reports, which are available on our [website](#) and through our free, electronic [subscription](#) service.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously, and provide training and technical assistance to governments, and have an extensive quality assurance program.

Contact information for the State Auditor's Office	
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Main telephone	(360) 902-0370
Toll-free Citizen Hotline	(866) 902-3900
Website	www.sao.wa.gov